

Porter County Recycling District: First Master Recyclers Graduates in Indiana

The Recycling & Waste Reduction District of Porter County recently marked the graduation of the first class of Master Recycler interns ever in the State of Indiana. Seventeen Porter County residents attended classes to learn about waste prevention, recycling processes, household hazardous waste, and composting during an extensive eight-week session.

The class included, from Valparaiso: Thomas Murphy, Kathy Sipple, Sue and Robert Klett, Jennie Girton, Jane Biuckie, Randy Overbey, Mary Koselke, Richard Millar and Gloria Potter; from Boone Grove: Robert Wichlinski; from Portage: James Bartos; from Chesterton: Russ Boelcke and Patricia Jackson; from Hebron: Gayle Tokarz and Ken Taylor; and from Ogden Dunes: James Biancotti.

The Master Recycler class featured guest speakers and included field trips to a landfill, materials recovery facility, compost facilities and Metro Recycling. The interns must fulfill 30 hours of volunteer Payback Hours in order to receive their Master Recycler Certification. The purpose of the program is to create a volunteer pool of knowledgeable residents who inspire others in their community to reduce waste in the home and work. Master Recycler programs are mainly found around the Pacific Northwest, with a few sprinkled around the rest of the United States. "The class provides a comprehensive approach to waste reduction in Porter County," said Donna Stuckert, public education coordinator. "It's great for anyone who is interested in learning how they can make a difference in the environment and who wants to help others to learn more."

The district is planning an evening Master Recycler class that will begin in September, details to be announced. Porter County residents or those who work in Porter County can register their interest for the next class on the district's website, www.ItMeansTheWorld.org.



Master Recyclers manning their booth at Earth Day.



Master Recycler students touring the Homewood material recovery facility to learn what happens to their recyclables after they leave their curbs.